

ABSTRACT

A telephone communication system utilizing a virtual phone wherein a telephone switch or similar digital switching device, a digital telephone and an external device such as a personal computer (PC) or other processor are generically interfaced. The virtual phone generic interface is configurable and comprises a set of virtual phone data structures, internal and external virtual phone application program interfaces, and an external transfer protocol. Software designated an abstraction layer provides communication between the internal virtual phone application program interface, the telephone switch and the telephone set. The generic interface converts proprietary telephone switch or external interface application protocols into a common format and functions as a protocol interpreter between proprietary switching system protocols and protocols of various applications.

BFLODOCS:467497_1 (@0Q101)

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